

Methodological note

1522 is the helpline number provided by the Equal Opportunities Department of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers to support and help victims of gender-based violence and stalking, in line with what is defined in the Istanbul Convention. It is free, guarantees anonymity and covers different forms of violence for 24 hours a day and in 4 different languages besides Italian (English, French, Arabic and Spanish). This helpline provides first aid information in case of emergency or useful information on the services and anti-violence centers active at territorial level to which victims of violence, or other users can turn. The database relating to the services to be addressed, is constantly updated by the Regional Administrations and the Associations active at local level: from the moment of activation of a new center or service or counter, all the indications regarding addresses and methods of service delivery are provided, allowing the 1522 operators to provide updated and timely indications.

The data is available starting in January 2013. The analysis of the phenomenon of violence and stalking arising from examination of the 1522 data, therefore, provides a cross section useful in understanding the dynamics and characteristics, which correspond surprisingly well with the profile already revealed by the sample surveys conducted by ISTAT on the same subject.

The recording takes place following questions posed by the operators of the toll-free number according to a standardized path whose filter is represented by the reason for the call. Depending on the different reasons for the call, the operator enters information and data, reporting what was stated by users in 1522.

Depending on the reason for the call, the calls have been classified into three macro-groups:

- Valid calls that come from interlocutors who call to get information or ask for support for themselves, for other people belonging to their friend and/or parental network;
- Invalid calls (nuisance calls) as coming from users whose purpose is not to ask for help but to joke, denigrate the same or for unintentional mistakes.

Within valid calls the information reported has been further subdivided into the macro-categories “users” and “victims”. Victims are those who have suffered some form of violence and/or stalking, and whose socio-economic and personal details are available that are much less investigated in users.

An important consideration is the standardization process on the database. The data have been made comparable for the different years since non-homogeneous response methods have been used in the different years. This standardization work has been carried out mainly to make the collected data available in the data warehouse accessible through ISTAT. See site <https://www.istat.it/en/violence-against-women>.

Specific attention should be paid to the number of cases: since they are calls (telephone and chat) and not people, the numbers and comments are always referred to this unit of detection and not to the user / victim who addresses the service. It is in fact possible that the same person will call the toll-free number several times, both for themselves and for others. The system to date, also for reasons of privacy, does not control this information except through a question that is addressed to the caller, asking whether or not it is the first time that the user has called the toll-free number. In the same way, since it is impossible to check the information collected during the call or the message sent, it is possible that the call is registered in the name of a possible interlocutor (other than the victim) but that it is, in fact, the same victim who does not want to report information related to himself. In this case, the database, acquiring all the information of a social and personal nature, is marked as a victim.

A last consideration must necessarily be made in order to guide the correct reading of the information reported, which is closely related to what has just been indicated: the fact that the database is made up of calls (via telephone or chat) leads to a very high and variable number of “unavailable” data (N.A. in the tables). Often the calls are interrupted before the end of the interview and in many cases it is not possible to attribute these missing data to the will not answer or to the interruption of the call. Where it has been possible to reconstruct the data of the intentional “not response”, from the unintentional “no response”, this encoding has been done.